

**Vermilion County Conservation District
Headquarters: Kennekuk County Park
Danville, IL**

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Wednesday, August 15, 2018
4:30 p.m.
Environmental Education Center, Cellular One Classroom
Kennekuk County Park
Danville, IL**

President Myers called the August Regular Meeting of the Vermilion County Conservation District Board of Trustees to order and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Roll call showed the following to be present.

Trustees Present: Randy A. Johnson
Shelley K. McLain
Jonathan A. Myers
Charles B. Schroeder
Doug R. Staske

Trustee(s) Absent: None

In attendance were Executive Director Pasquale and Amy Steeples, Recording Secretary.

Staff members present included: Susan Biggs Warner, Lara Darling, Kim Fox, Mike Kotcher, Jeff Lete, Charlie Rhoden, and Gary Tyrl.

First order of business, agenda item number four, was the Adoption of, or Amendments to the Agenda.

President Myers asked for amendments to the agenda.

Trustee Johnson moved to approve the agenda as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

Agenda item number five a. Approval of the Minutes from the July 18, 2018, Regular Meeting. With no corrections, *Trustee Staske moved to approve the July 18, 2018, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Agenda item number five b. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes from the July 18, 2018, Regular Meeting. With no corrections, *Trustee Schroeder moved to approve the July 18, 2018, Executive Session Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Agenda item number five c. Approval of the Minutes from the August 1, 2018, Special Meeting. With no corrections, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the August 1, 2018, Special Meeting Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Agenda item number five d. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes from the August 1, 2018, Special Meeting. With no corrections, *Trustee Staske moved to approve the August 1, 2018, Executive Session Minutes as presented. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item number six. Audience Comments. President Myers stated each person has a maximum of three minutes, total maximum of 30 minutes for audience comments. There were none.

Agenda item number seven, the Treasurer's Report. President Myers asked if there were any questions on items seven a through d.

With no questions or comments, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve the Current List of Bills from July 2018 in the amount of \$17,704.40, which included check #'s 38912 -38931; the Manual Checks for July 2018 in the amount of \$568,841.76 which included check #'s 38718 – 38731, 38750 – 38753, 38787 -38806, and 38841 – 38861; the General Journal Entries for July 31, 2018; and the July 2018 Budget Report. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain.*

President Myers requested a roll call vote. The results as follows:

Trustee Johnson	-	yes
Trustee McLain	-	yes
Trustee Staske	-	yes
Trustee Schroeder	-	yes
President Myers	-	yes

The vote was 5 – 0 in favor, motion carried.

Agenda item number seven e. Executive Director Pasquale reported that the NOW checking account balance is \$115,700; Illinois Funds Investment Pool totaled \$160,250, the Illinois Funds Money Market balance is \$5,200. First Farmers Bank balance is \$247,800; and Central Illinois Bank has a balance of \$248,350. The HRA has a balance of \$7,500. First Savings Bank account balance is at \$248,000. A new 6 mo. CD was taken out at Iroquois Federal at 2.05% interest in the amount of \$250,000 (maturity date 1/25/19). The balance remaining of the \$1M Bond Fund is \$111,368.

The grand total of cash and investments less bond funds is \$1,171,432. This compares to \$349,825 in August of 2016. There was no report listed for August 2017.

Executive Director Pasquale reported that when the second installment of real estate taxes is received, investments will be considered. Summer season payroll is running around \$32,000 every two weeks; a bond interest payment is due September 1, 2018 of \$19,000; General Liability Insurance of at least \$27,000 due December 1; a bond interest and

principal payment of \$104,000 due March 1, 2019. The Kickapoo Rail Trail expenditures will begin, and the district will be reimbursed up to \$180,000 for those.

President Myers asked if there were any questions from the trustees regarding any of the accounts or investments. There were none.

Agenda item number eight, Specific Items of Business to be Transacted.

Item eight a. Approve Ordinance No. 147, ordinance regulating political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by District Officers and Employees pursuant to the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

President Myers met with the VCCD's attorney and clarified that this was stated in the least restrictive language possible. Presence as a district employee at political events and as an elected official was explained to President Myers satisfaction.

Brief discussion ensued regarding specific situations, and all questions were answered to the satisfaction of the trustees.

With no other comments and all questions answered, *Trustee Johnson moved to approve Ordinance No. 147 regulating political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by district officers and employees pursuant to the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act for the Vermilion County Conservation District. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight b. Approve/discuss Ordinance No. 148, ordinance addressing sexual harassment. President Myers stated after review of Ordinance No. 148 it was found that it did not address the specific senior officer, including associate director(s).

Discussion ensued.

This ordinance must be consistent with the VCCD Personnel Policy, which is still under review as well. *Trustee Johnson moved to table agenda item eight b. Ordinance No. 148. This was followed by a second from Trustee McLain. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight c. Approve specifications for general liability insurance. President Myers gave a brief history of IPARKS and the previous insurer. He noted that in the specifications, the Vermilion County Conservation Foundation was listed under this policy held by the VCCD. The Foundation is not technically an arm of the District; therefore he suggests omitting them as a named insured.

Executive Director Pasquale remarked that removing them would not change the premium.

Discussion ensued.

The trustees agreed to strike item 11, VCCF from the policy specifications. *Trustee Schroeder moved to approve the General Liability Insurance specifications as amended, and to be put out for bid. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.*

Item eight d. Discuss updated personnel policy. The seventy-seven page document drafted by the VCCD Attorney was provided to the trustees for review previously.

Trustee Johnson commented that he did not think that the Family Medical Leave Act mentioned in the policy, applied to companies with less than 15 employees.

Executive Director Pasquale will look into this.

Trustee Staske suggested that an index is necessary. All were in agreement.

Executive Director Pasquale mentioned the addition of the two associate director positions and employee benefits needed revisited. Employee benefits specifically regarding parameters for free camping and boat stickers. He asked the trustees to send any corrections or revisions to him via email. Trustee McLain will meet with Kim Fox and him regarding items for consideration. Another draft will be compiled for further review.

President Myers stated that the VCCD Attorney direction regarding a district vehicle policy needed to be addressed. Executive Director Pasquale provided additional information regarding this to each trustee. Policy regarding District cell phones and computers was also mentioned.

Item eight e. Approve Resolution 18-5 allowing the Executive Director to sign for the transfer of stocks and funds from the Gary Whittaker Bequest. President Myers stated that William C. Burnside & Company, Inc. had requested that one person be authorized by the VCCD Board to sign all documents to complete the transfer of any stocks or other funds from the bequest.

With no comments, Trustee Staske moved to approve Resolution 18-5, authorizing the Vermilion County Conservation District Executive Director, Jamie Pasquale, to sign all documents to complete the transfer of any stocks or other funds from the bequest of Gary Whittaker to the Vermilion County Conservation District. This was followed by a second from Trustee Schroeder. All in favor by acclamation, motion carried.

There was no Executive Session.

Agenda item nine a: VCCF Report. Amy Steeples, Recording Secretary for the VCCF reported the next meeting is Friday, October 12, 9 a.m., Zack Hickman Room, Kennekuk Visitor Center.

This concluded the VCCF Report.

Agenda item nine b; VCCD Education Report. The trustees were provided with this report in a mailing. Lara Darling explained a new Outdoor School signup procedure was instituted this year. Instead of a "call-in day", teachers submit three choices and the education staff will meet to work out the fall and spring schedules. 100% participation from Vermilion County Schools is expected again this year.

Agenda item nine c: VCCD Maintenance and Land Management Report. The trustees were provided with these reports in a mailing. President Myers inquired about the Emerald Ash Boer beetles and the effect on the District's trees.

Charlie Rhoden, Forest Glen Park Superintendent, answered that many, many trees have been affected by the beetle and died. The dead trees in the public areas were being removed, since they may pose a danger to the public; the ash trees in the forest are being left to nature.

Agenda item nine d: Health Insurance Committee. President Myers informed the trustees that the current employee health insurance plan expires December 31, and is reviewed for renewal annually. A committee will meet to discuss options with the insurance agent(s) for information and employees to discuss their concerns. Rates are basically the same with each policy, so there is no advantage to bidding it out. The current agent for the District is Gordon Thoennes with Dimond Brothers, Insurance.

After a brief discussion, President Myers will serve on this committee. He will meet with Executive Director Pasquale, who will appoint employees to this committee.

Agenda item nine e. Appoint Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Phase II and III Feasibility Study Committee. President Myers reported that Trustee Staske will serve as chairman for this committee. Executive Director Pasquale will provide all plans and documentation regarding these phases to him.

President Myers reiterated that the goals of this committee will be to determine if an addition is needed; and to work together to put a price with the plan.

Trustee Staske stated that he is open to all points of view; to become educated on what has been done, what was planned for the future. He would like to speak with anyone having facts on what has transpired.

Agenda item nine f. Appoint Kennekuk Environmental Education Center Phase II and III Construction Committee. President Myers stated that Trustee Johnson was appointed by County Board Chairman Marron.

This concluded Representative Reports.

Agenda item ten: Report from the Executive Director. Executive Director Pasquale began with the Lake Mingo Dam inspection. This is required every three years by IDNR; there were no issues. The Cottage in the Glen, Forest Glen Preserve, is officially closed. It was determined to be cost prohibitive. The power is shut off and it is vacant.

Nick Jeurissen and he attended the IACD quarterly meeting at Starved Rock State Park.

Executive Director Pasquale completed the Illinois Public Risk Safety Grant and it has been submitted. Illinois Public Risk Fund is the District Workman's Compensation carrier.

Update on the north emergency access road progress: Executive Director Pasquale gave a brief background on the project. Kennekuk has only one entrance/exit. It was deemed necessary to accommodate large events, and for safety concerns to add a secondary access. Two options were explored: one to the south which would cross a field that the District did not own and the other, off county road 2300 North Road, which dead ends into an old township road. The second was deemed a better option, this involved extensive research into ownership of the adjacent landowners of certain portions of the access area

chosen. After determination of ownership, time was spent in negotiations with said landowners; some lease contracts and land donations were agreed upon – but not to a complete and clear project end at the time the previous executive director left. A culvert along this access needed replaced at a cost of approximately \$20,000, by Executive Director Pasquale's estimation. It is his recommendation that this project be abandoned.

Discussion ensued. It was the consensus of the Board to abandon the project at this time.

The Cheeseburgers & Fun event, sponsored by the VCC Foundation, was held on Saturday, August 11. The bulk of the work for this is done by the Foundation with some assistance from Amy Steeples. The Kennekuk staff is involved with site preparation and tear down, approximately 350 hours. Attendance appeared to be a little less this year; six hundred cheeseburgers were sold. There are no official numbers yet. Both Trustees Johnson and McLain attended.

Executive Director Pasquale reported that after review of the Haunted Happenings event, taking into account the amount of labor and revenue involved, a decision was made to cancel the event. It takes over 1,000 hours, which amounts to \$25,000 in labor for an event that nets \$8,000 to \$10,000. Other considerations were Outdoor School instructors working on scenes thus limiting schools a fall week option; gas and vehicle expense for Forest Glen staff traveling to and from Kennekuk; and maintenance staff not able to complete fall and winter projects due to time spent on site preparation and haunted trail scene construction. There are plans for a smaller, less time consuming event to replace Haunted Happenings for 2019. He asked the Board for their concerns and comments.

Not counting fuel, man hours and advertisement, expenses are approximately \$5,000 - \$7,000.

Lara Darling commented that she was willing to do a smaller scale event, "Nature's Myths, Legends & Lore" to include a cookout and night hike.

Trustee Staske suggested a lighted carved pumpkin display event over a large area.

Trustee McLain stated that she would like to see something planned for 2019, due to the fact that we have an obligation to the taxpayers of Vermilion County offering a similar event. This event brought a lot of people to the park, and that was great for the District.

Executive Director Pasquale will meet with Fehr Graham and IDNR regarding IDNR's plans to move forward on the KRT. IDOT has plans to redesign the trestle bridge due to contractor bidding. IDNR is responsible for all costs relating to this change because it is not included in the ITEP funding. A concern is the ITEP funding is in the District's name, even though IDNR owns the trestle. All expenses and reimbursements will go through the VCCD, likely up to \$1M. Clearly, we want this to happen so the District and IDNR will work together. He will keep the board updated.

The next VCCD Board Meeting will be Wednesday, September 19, 2018; 4:30 p.m., Gannett Outdoor Education Center, Forest Glen Preserve.

There were no other comments or questions.

This concluded the Report of the Executive Director.

Agenda item eleven: President's and Trustee's Comments.

President Myers had no comment.

Trustee Johnson commented that he attended his first Cheeseburgers & Fun event and thought it was great. Good job.

Trustee Schroeder had no comment.

Trustee Staske had no comment.

Trustee McLain had no comment.

With no further discussion and all business transacted, *Trustee McLain moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:37 p.m. This was followed by a second from Trustee Johnson* Trustee Johnson had no comment. *All in favor by acclamation.*

Shelley McLain
Secretary
VCCD Board of Trustees